

HB 993

Dear Public Health Committee:

I'm Dr. Jeffrey Rosow, the dental director at Connecticut Valley Hospital, a state psychiatric hospital which also has a substance abuse program. I've worked as a dentist at CVH for the last 32 years, during which I have been the dental director for the last 20. First I need to state clearly that I'm expressing my own opinion based on my professional experiences rather than representing the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services. I urge you to pass SB No. 993 "An Act concerning Dental Assistants and Expanded Function Dental Auxiliary" as written. Being the only dentist serving our entire special needs patient population of close to 600 patients it is critical that our entire team work to our maximum capability and capacity. Expanding the duties of our 2 dental assistants will greatly enhance both the quality and quantity of the procedures we perform. With proper training, there is no reason why, under my supervision, our dental assistants would not be able to perform procedures such as the fabrication of temporary restorations, placing liners, suture removal and other duties now being considered under the EFDA legislation. This would allow me to focus on the portions of procedures needing a higher level of training and expertise. Since I would be ultimately responsible, it would insure that the quality of the work performed by our dental assistants met our standard of care. There is a tremendous need for dental care in our patient population, which for various reasons, are underserved. Expanded function dental assistants are being used successfully in over 40 other states. By passing this legislation, allowing dental assistants to do more, with the safeguard of supervision and responsibility absorbed by the dentist, I strongly feel that it will provide a safe, cost effective, and efficient way, to provide dental services to many who are not now receiving them here in Connecticut.

I would also consider this legislation independently of any mid-level dental provider bill that comes to your attention. I think we've done our underserved populations a disservice in the past of tying EFDA to mid-level provider legislation by thinking that you couldn't have one without the other. Unlike the various mid-level provider models, EFDA has already been established and proven in the majority of states. Connecticut is really far behind when it comes to this. I'm not denying that a mid-level provider model of some kind might be helpful in our state, but am only saying it should be considered independently as another piece of the access puzzle. Approval of SB No. 993 is certainly an effective, proven, and relatively easy step in allowing our state to catch up with the rest of the country in expanding the duties of our dental auxiliaries, and I would urge you to vote for it. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey Rosow D.M.D
Dental Director
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3/14/13

